

Iowa Code
Subchapter 10
Division on the Status of African-Americans

216A.141 Definitions.

For purposes of this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Administrator" means the administrator of the division on the status of African-Americans of the department of human rights.
2. "Commission" means the commission on the status of African-Americans.
3. "Division" means the division on the status of African-Americans of the department of human rights.

216A.142 Establishment.

There is established a commission on the status of African-Americans to consist of nine members, appointed by the governor, and confirmed by the senate, to staggered four-year terms. At least five members shall be individuals who are African-American. Members shall be appointed representing every geographical area of the state. No more than a simple majority of the commission shall be of the same political party. The members of the commission shall appoint from its membership a commission chairperson and a vice chairperson and other officers as the commission deems necessary. Vacancies on the commission shall be filled for the remainder of the term of the original appointment.

216A.143 Meetings of the commission.

The commission shall meet at least once each quarter and may hold special meetings on the call of the chairperson. The commission may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A as it deems necessary for the conduct of its business. The members of the commission shall be reimbursed for actual expenses while engaged in their official duties. Members may also be eligible to receive compensation as provided in section 7E.6.

216A.144 Objectives of commission.

The commission shall study the changing needs and problems of African-Americans in this state, and recommend new programs, policies, and constructive action to the governor and the general assembly including, but not limited to, the following areas:

1. Public and private employment policies and practices.
2. Iowa labor laws.
3. Legal treatment relating to political and civil rights.
4. African-American children, youth, and families.
5. Expanded programs to assist African-Americans as consumers.
6. The employment of African-Americans and the initiation and sustaining of African-American businesses and African-American entrepreneurship.
7. African-Americans as members of private and public boards, committees, and organizations.
8. Education, health, housing, social welfare, human rights, and recreation.
9. The legal system, including law enforcement, both criminal and civil.
10. Social service programs.

216A.145 Employees and responsibility.

The administrator shall be the administrative officer of the division and shall be responsible for implementing policies and programs. The administrator may employ, in accordance with chapter 19A, other persons necessary to carry out the programs of the division.

216A.146 Duties.

The commission shall do all of the following:

1. Serve as an information clearinghouse on programs and agencies operating to assist African-Americans. Clearinghouse duties shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Service as a referral agency to assist African-Americans in securing access to state agencies and programs.
 - b. Service as a liaison with federal, state, and local governmental units and private organizations on matters relating to African-Americans.
 - c. Service as a communications conduit to state government for African-American organizations in the state.
 - d. Stimulation of public awareness of the problems of African-Americans.
2. Conduct conferences and training programs for African-Americans, public and private

agencies and organizations, and the general public.

3. Coordinate, assist, and cooperate with public and private agencies in efforts to expand equal rights and opportunities for African-Americans in the areas of: employment, economic development, education, health, housing, recreation, social welfare, social services, and the legal system.
4. Serve as the central permanent agency for the advocacy of services for African-Americans.
5. Provide assistance to and cooperate with individuals and public and private agencies and organizations in joint efforts to study and resolve problems relating to the improvement of the status of African-Americans.
6. Publish and disseminate information relating to African-Americans, including publicizing their accomplishments and contributions to this state.
7. Evaluate existing and proposed programs and legislation for their impact on African-Americans.
8. Coordinate or conduct training programs for African-Americans to enable them to assume leadership positions.
9. Conduct surveys of African-Americans to ascertain their needs.
10. Assist the department of personnel in the elimination of underutilization of African-Americans in the state's workforce.
11. Recommend legislation to the governor and the general assembly designed to improve the educational opportunities and the economic and social conditions of African-Americans in this state.

216A.147 Additional authority.

The commission may do any or all of the following:

1. Do all things necessary, proper, and expedient in accomplishing the duties listed in section 216A.146 and this section.
2. Hold hearings.
3. Enter into contracts, within the limit of funds made available, with individuals, organizations, and institutions for services furthering the objectives of the commission as listed in section 216A.144.
4. Seek advice and counsel of informed individuals and organizations, in the accomplishment of the objectives of the commission.
5. Apply for and accept grants of money or property from the federal government or any other source, and upon its own order use this money, property, or other resources to accomplish the objectives of the commission.

216A.148 Access to information.

For the purpose of research and study, the commission and the administrator shall have access to all nonconfidential records, data, information, and statistics of all departments, boards, commissions, agencies, and institutions of this state.

216A.149 Annual report.

Not later than August 1 of each year, the commission shall file a report with the governor and the general assembly of its activities for the previous fiscal year and its programmatic priorities for the current year beginning July 1. The commission may submit with the report any recommendations pertaining to its affairs and shall submit recommendations for legislative consideration and other action it deems necessary.